

# Rhode Island Litter Task Force

235 Promenade Street • Phone: (401) 461-4075 • Email: riacc@surfglobal.net

## Meeting Minutes

January 15, 2004

Present: Geoff DiCenso, RIACC; Anita SanAntonio, RI Food Dealers Association; Allen Bridgman, ASRI; Barry Schiller, Sierra Club; Jeff Fornaro, RI Earth Day Committee; Tom Getz, DEM; Beshka Candelaria, Groundworks Providence.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 3:06 pm.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: The minutes of the December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved as written.

The question was raised as to whether the 1-888-CLEANRI hotline was up and running. The number was called and a less than sufficient answering machine message answered, so presumably that is still being worked on.

The topic of overflowing trash cans in the Dec. minutes brought on the discussion of plastic grocery bags. The members were informed that a program in Texas uses bags that are made with starches that break down quickly leaving small plastic pieces. A discussion ensued as to whether or not this was a good idea to introduce in RI. Further discussion focused on what actually happens to bags that are deposited in RI grocery store recycling containers. It was mentioned that the Publix Grocery Stores Chain (in the south) send their bags to be recycled into plastic composite building materials. Some stores offer discounts for reusing bags.

Litter Survey Results Update: The members were informed that follow up calls were made to the recipients of the surveys, but no additional surveys were yet returned. It was agreed that perhaps the timing in relation to the Nicholson and Sands, LLP "Hard to Dispose of Items" survey, which was sent out a week or so before ours, caused some recipients not to respond. It was agreed that since some of the questions were similar, the Task Force may be able to use their data.

Dunkin Donuts Brainstorming and Meeting: The list of anti-litter suggestions for the Rt. 295 Visitor Center was discussed. It was noted that Cumberland Farms gives a discount on coffee when refilling one of their reusable cups. It was suggested that Dunkin Donuts could have similar reusable cups with an anti-litter message and logos from the Earth Day Committee, The Litter Task Force, and others for sale at a special price with some of the proceeds going towards the Litter Task Force for clean ups and other anti-litter campaigns. Another suggestion was to charge an additional penny to the price of all items at that location which would go to the Task Force for litter cleanups and other anti-litter campaigns. It was agreed that implementing some or all of these ideas would be a "win-win" situation whereby Dunkin Donuts has a good opportunity for excellent publicity and litter programs would be funded. Additionally, this could encourage other franchises/stores to establish similar programs. Geoff will finalize the list and email it to Fred Vincent before his meeting with the Dunkin Donuts representatives.

## Members

Audubon Society of RI • Buckeye Brook • Watershed Assn. • Clean Water Action  
RI Assn. of Conservation Commissions • RI Dept. of Environmental Management • RI Food Dealers Assn. Sierra Club of RI •  
Woonasquatucket River Watershed Assn

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Litter Legislation: A discussion ensued on whether or not to advocate a bottle bill and litter tax. The idea was raised that a House or Senate Commission on Litter should be established. Our Litter Task Force has taken the first steps and could be recognized, with inclusion of government representatives, as the official task force. The litter survey could come have some impact into this process.

Next Meeting: February 19, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

Allen Bridgman

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